

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

Majority (202) 225-5051  
Minority (202) 225-5074

February 12, 2007

The Honorable Michael Chertoff  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Nebraska Avenue Center, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff,

I write to you regarding my concern about the smuggling tunnels located under the United States-Mexico border. A January 30, 2007, *Los Angeles Times* article entitled "Unfilled Tunnels a Weak Link at Border," stated there are currently seven tunnels that need to be filled to prevent human and drug smuggling. After speaking with a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) spokesperson, the *Times* reported only two of the seven tunnels had been capped (blocking off the interior of the tunnel at the Mexican border), the cost of filling the tunnels would be \$2.7 million, and CBP was attempting to locate the money to complete the work.

On February 2, 2007, my staff was informed that despite CBP spokesperson's comments to the press, all seven of the tunnels were capped, each having around-the-clock surveillance. And CBP had, in fact, identified its salaries and expenses budget to pay the \$2.7 million needed to fill the tunnels. To further add to the mixed messages, I learned last week my colleagues on the Senate side were told the \$2.7 million to fill the tunnels would need to be provided by Congress.

In an age in which illegal immigration is at the forefront of debate in our country – in which we have concerns over not just drug and human smuggling, but the ability of terrorists to infiltrate our borders – why is CBP all over the map on this issue? Those of us charged with oversight in the House and Senate should feel confident that we are receiving accurate information, particularly as it pertains to monies to secure the infrastructure of the United States. Additionally, when the Administration speaks publicly regarding its law enforcement efforts on the border, it should take every effort to ensure its message is factually correct. If you believe CBP's statements were

The Honorable Michael Chertoff  
February 12, 2007  
Page 2

misreported in the *L.A. Times*, the Department of Homeland Security should have reacted immediately to clarify the misinformation.

I am further discouraged that after inquiring as to a timeframe, I learned there is not a date certain for filling the tunnels, as CBP must negotiate the project with property owners. As I feel that I am unable to obtain consistent information regarding the tunnels, I ask that you make your staff available to brief my staff on this issue by February 26, 2007. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Anne Marie Turner, Counsel, at (202) 225-5074.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Davis", written in a cursive style.

Tom Davis  
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable W. Ralph Basham  
The Honorable Henry A. Waxman